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ABSTRACT

To identify motivations and expectations regarding experiential education programs, a study interviewed 143 individuals from five participant groups. High school students, program coordinators, secondary principals, employers/sponsors, and parents involved in eighteen experiential programs in four states (Ohio, California, Florida, and Massachusetts) were interviewed. Programs ranged from alternative schools which offered optional community activities to service learning programs, to Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA) youth programs. Although some students were paid and some received academic credit, all programs offered young people the opportunity for a structured learning experience in a workplace setting. Results of the interview data revealed seven areas of conflicting expectations: pay, recruitment, support for programs, quality of learning, graduation credit for experiences, creation of placements, and appropriate scheduling. Although respondents generally expressed positive attitudes, each constituency brings to program participation a unique set of problems and needs. Learners and their parents are convinced of the value of experiential education: employers/sponsors are also, as long as organizational efficiency and productivity are not compromised: and school administrators are interested in experiential education as a means of addressing building problems and community expectations.
(Author/MEK)

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COLLABORATION IN EXPERIENTIAL EDUCATION: A PROFILE OF PARTICIPANT EXPECTATIONS

Research and Development Series No. 198

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FOREWORD

The last decade has been characterized by questioning and circumspection regarding the appropriateness and effectiveness of our traditional system of secondary education. Four national panels have been charged with studying and assessing that system: The Panel on Youth of the President's Science Advisory Committee led by James Coleman; the National Commission on the Reform of Secondary Education chaired by B. Frank Brown; The National Panel on High Schools and Adolescent Education headed by John Henry Martin; and, recently, The Carnegie Council on Policy Studies in High Education chaired by Clark Kerr. Based on their findings, all four panels have strongly recommended that community-based experiential learning become an integral part of the high school curriculum. Their recommendations spring from observations that the traditional high school experience isolates adolescents from their destinies in the real world and that its routine and simulated format is not congruent in a time characterized by change and intensity. The recommendation has received wide acceptance but has initiated little substantive change in the overall way we educate our youth. The philosophical and logistical implications of moving secondary education out into the community have been perceived as overwhelming, even threatening, by some groups. But slow, cautious movement toward the community is occurring.

This study, sponsored by The National Institute of Education (NIE), is presented to assist developers of such programs in responding with perception and effectiveness to the expectations and concerns of the five constituent groups critical to the implementation of experiential education. Although it may seem only natural that young people should have opportunities to learn and receive adult guidance in their respective communities, our way of dealing with high school students has become so institutionalized that there is currently need for a process, a program, for reintegrating youth into natural community-based learning environments. This study is designed to facilitate that process.

The National Center expresses its appreciation to the respondents who shared with the researchers their experiences and insights with regard to experiential education. Their enthusiasm and candor were basic to the effectiveness of the

study. Gratitude is due Thomas McClain and Lucinda Kindred who reviewed the report and contributed suggestions.

Special appreciation is given to Ronald Bucknam, NIE Project Officer, for his guidance and support. Recognition is due Louise Wasson for preparation of the report, Lester Jipp for his collaborative contributions, and Richard Miguel for his overall direction of the project. We wish to thank Jeanette McConaughy for editing the manuscript and Jackie Masters for coordinating the typing and production of the report.

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ABSTRACT

Collaboration in Experiential Education:
A Profile of Participant Expectations

Collaboration in Experiential Education: A Profile of Participant Expectations identifies the motivations and expectations of learners, employer/sponsors, building principals, coordinators, and parents associated with programs providing experiential education in workplace settings. The report is intended to meet the informational needs of directors and coordinators new to experiential education and of researchers attempting to identify influences on and outcomes of experiential education participation. One hundred forty-three individuals from five participant groups--high school students, program coordinators, secondary principals, employer/sponsors, and parents--were interviewed. Participants were involved in eighteen experiential programs in four states--Ohio, California, Florida, and Massachusetts. Programs ranged from alternative schools which offered optional community activities, to service learning programs, to CETA Youth Programs. All programs offered young people the opportunity for a structured learning experience in a workplace setting. Some learners were paid, some received credit.

We asked the following questions of students, employer/sponsors, school principals, coordinators, and parents in order to establish their motivations and expectations with regard to participation in experiential education.

- What motivated you to become involved in experiential education?
- How do you (your school, organization) expect to benefit from participation in the program?
- What services or behaviors do you expect of other participants in the program?
- Are your expectations being fulfilled?
- Under what circumstances would you cease to participate in this experiential education program?

This report is a condensation of a 133 page technical report. The longer document, including appendices and a more extensive discussion of interview data is available at the National Center.

CHAPTER I

RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

- *The high school does not and cannot provide a complete environment for youth education*
- *The age-segregation of youth must be overcome if they are to be provided a more complete environment for transition to adulthood.*
- *An effective education-work policy must be developed.*
- *Citizenship education should be moved into the larger community while, at the same time, it is developed in school through exercise of students' rights and responsibilities.*
- *A variety of educational options and alternatives should be provided both within and outside of school with public financial support for students exercising choice among the alternatives.*
- *The range and kind of nonformal educational opportunities should be extended.*
- *Compulsory attendance laws should be changed so as to lower the school-leaving age and individuals should be offered alternatives to the conventional twelve-year schooling pattern.*
- *The learning and teaching sources of school and community should be integrated.*
- *Secondary education should be designed as an integral part in a lifetime continuum of education.*
- *The size of the high school should be drastically reduced and its functions made more specialized.*[1]

---

1. Paul E. Barton and Bryna Shore Fraser, Between Two Worlds: Youth Transition from School to Work, 3 vols. (Washington: D. C.: Center for Education and Work, National Manpower Institute, 1978), p. 26.

These ten points represent a synthesis of current thought regarding the reform and updating of secondary education in the United States. The experiential education movement, as exemplified by programs such as Experience-Based Career Education, Cooperative Vocational Education, and the CETA Youth Initiatives, has emerged as an intentional thrust toward addressing these problem areas. Experiential education encompasses those programs which develop structured activities in community settings through which young learners interact with adults, acquiring skills, exploring careers, gaining work experience, and sometimes earning money and/or graduation credit. School and community together assist young people in negotiating the transition from youth to adulthood, from school to work.

As well intended and extensive as these collaborative efforts in the service of youth have been, reason would suggest that individuals and institutions involved in experiential learning projects bring with them different needs and priorities. So far as these needs are recognized and addressed, to that extent are the participants able and inclined to maintain commitment to experiential education.

It is not the task of this study to argue the merits of experiential education. That has been done convincingly by educators such as Morris Keaton, Robert Sexton, and James Coleman. Rather, our purpose is to identify and compare the expectations of the various participants in experiential education programming--the students, the community sponsors, the school administrators, the parents, and the program coordinators--and to assess the extent to which their respective expectations are being fulfilled. We are interested in identifying the motivations and expectations of all parties involved in experiential education in such a way that these needs and expectations may be synergistically addressed by program planners.

All eighteen experiential education programs considered in this study have developed printed lists of program outcome objectives. These formal statements of intent are currently de rigeur for educational programs besieged by accountability demands. Such stated goals as described by Crowe and Adams "are pedagogically and politically safe and philosophically coherent. The nonstated goals are those that are in participants' heads and motivate them to actively participate and support the program."[1] It was these nonstated goals which

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1. Michael R. Crowe and Kay A. Adams, The Current Status of Assessing Experiential Education Programs (Columbus: National Center for Research in Vocational Education, 1979), p. 86.

we were attempting to isolate and identify as we interviewed students, employer/sponsors, principals, program coordinators, and parents.

Barton and Fraser in Between Two Worlds: Youth Transition from School to Work suggest the following with regard to experiential programming:

> More data are needed to determine the expectations and goals of the various parties involved. For example, do students view it primarily as a source of income, or as a source of credit toward certification? Do employers view it as a source of relatively inexpensive or free labor?[1]

Additional questions are posed for researchers:

- What barriers do interested employers face (e.g., work schedules, insurance agreements, additional administrative work)?
- What kinds of work-experience arrangements are they (employers) currently involved in? Which do they prefer (e.g., paid vs. unpaid, full- vs. part-time, short-term vs. long-term, school-based vs. employer initiated arrangements)?
- What is their (employers') level of involvement in work experience efforts? Would this involvement increase if legal restrictions were eased?
- What are the incentives for employers to participate in work-experience programs?[2]

It is to such concerns that we address this study--to identify sector expectations; to establish how far they are complementary and to what extent they are incompatible; and to

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1. Barton, Between Two Worlds, vol. 3, pp.59-60.

2. Ibid.

determine, in cases of conflict, whose expectations take priority. The expectations of students, employers, administrators, parents, and coordinators must be acknowledged and addressed if programs are to survive and serve. If the needs of learners are not met, they will cease to enroll; if employers' expectations are subsumed, placements will not be provided; if administrative priorities are ignored, principals will withdraw support; if parents are skeptical, they may withhold financial and parental consent; and, if coordinators are dissatisfied, they can undermine program momentum. Experiential education must be a collaborative venture. Consistent involvement from all sectors is basic to the concept. Toward understanding the basis for such involvement, we asked participants specific questions:

- What motivated you to become involved in experiential education?
- How do you (your school, organization) expect to benefit from participation in the program?
- What services or behaviors do you expect of other participants in the program?
- Are your expectations being fulfilled?
- Under what circumstances would you cease to participate in this program?

It was our hope that, once defined, participant expectations would serve as a foundation for responsive, reality-based program planning in experiential education. Aware of specific expectation sets, program developers could either arrange to address them or design and present specific programs for identified populations with complementary expectations. Such needs-based planning could anticipate and eliminate conflict and disappointment with regard to the outcomes of experiential education.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Collaboration Toward WIN-WIN Outcomes

A basic requisite for any school-supported experiential education undertaking should be that it benefit student participants. Fortunately there exists a built-in control for this requirement--if the students perceive no benefits from participation, they will not sign up thereby forcing the program to change or die.

McClain and Sockol emphasize this primacy of student needs in School/Business Partnerships: A Practitioner's Guide

> The partnership should not be viewed as a recruitment scheme for business. If teachers, guidance counselors, students, or parents perceive this to be the case, inevitable complications occur.
>
> The partnership should not become a public relations stunt for either institution. Personal gain should not be the ulterior motive of institutional participants. Betterment of the student and the community should be.[1]

On the other hand, Michael Hart of Lockheed-Georgia suggests:

> It isn't necessary for all to agree on a general goal and there is nothing wrong with people coming into a program for selfish reasons. Subgoals can exist as long as they are clearly understood by all. ...You can't assume that you are all on the same wave length. When problems occur in collaboration

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1. Richard A. Sockol and Thomas W. McClain, School/Business Partnerships: A Practitioner's Guide (Amherst: Institute for Governmental Services, University of Massachusetts, 1978) p. 4.

> they almost always have their roots in the groups' reason for participating and their understanding of the program's purpose. A company may be truly anxious to help youngsters, or they may have an EEO (Equal Employment Opportunity) problem. The school might believe in alternative forms of education or they might just want some youngsters out of the classroom.[1]

Sockol and McClain acknowledge the existence of hidden agendas and suggest that they be presented openly to other program participants.

> Probably one of the most stalling factors, these agendas should be aired, fully discussed and resolved if the program is to move forward.[2]

Robert Sexton of the University of Kentucky echoes their recommendations as he states:

> The cooperation among institutions necessary for experiential education is often frustrated by inability to recognize needs.[3]

A study of student and employer expectations of post-secondary cooperative education conducted in 1967 suggests that the employers expect:

> Continual placement of students at a single task so as to contribute to the firm's productivity; involvement in the selection of students; provision of students with good work habits and desirable personal attributes; students who are willing to perform a variety of tasks; the college's provision of specific occupational training; the teacher-coordinator's provision of effective coordination and trouble shooting.[4]

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1. Marcia Rose, But for Me It Wouldn't Work (Columbus: National Center for Research in Vocational Education, 1979), p. 55.

2. Sockol, School/Business, p. 9.

3. Robert F. Sexton, Experiential Education and Community Involvement Practices at the Post-Secondary Level: Implications for Career Education (Washington, D.C.: National Advisory Council for Career Education, 1977), p. 31.

4. Barry Heerman, Cooperative Education in Community Colleges (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1973), p. 117.

The pivotal question for program policy maker is whether or not these expectations can be addressed in concert with student expectations which have been described as:

> Educational values; specific training for an occupation; academic credit; varied and interesting assignments; supervision that is pleasant, fair and helpful; at least minimum wage; opportunity for further training.[1]

If programs are to succeed, there is a need for such candid collaboration and compromise that participation in experiential education becomes a WIN-WIN activity for all sectors involved. Certainly justification for the total endeavor should be student benefit, but in a circular way students will have greater and more consistent access to such benefits if employers and school administrators perceive experiential programs as meeting their needs also. Although, from the perspective of educators, altruism might be the most preferred basis for business participation, sometimes the charitable contribution is the first item to go when pressures of time and economy come to bear. It is in the interest of program survival that all participants stand to benefit and have an instrumental interest in the program's success.

Advisory boards can be effective in negotiating expectations and facilitating collaborative policy making. The National Student Volunteer Program is particularly committed to the advisory board concept:

> The success of a program depends on enlisting the cooperation of individuals with divergent viewpoints, and keeping these different perspectives in proper balance when making policy decisions. That's where the advisory board comes in--it serves as a forum for contesting priorities and resolving strains within the program. Differences of opinion are bound to come up, whether you provide for them or not. Bringing them inside the program is a way of making sure that the program will represent all sides of a diverse constituency, instead of being itself just one special interest among many in the public forum.[2]

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1. Heerman, Cooperative Education, p. 117.

2. National Student Volunteer Program, High School Student Volunteers (Washington, D. C.: ACTION, 1972), p. 27.

Finally, Donald Clark of the National Association for Industry Education Cooperation reaffirms the symbiotic needs of education and industry:

> Young people need jobs and industry needs human resources for its operation. While education and industry have their separate goals, both are concerned with the development and utilization of human resources, particularly with respect to the employment of youth.[1]

It appears that experiential programs can accommodate the diverse needs of educators, industry and youth, but only if these participants are from the beginning candid in stating and reasonable in justifying their expectations.

Expectations of Experiential Education

Student Expectations

Students do not publish. Adults in the fields of education, labor, and industry are wont to expound on what young people need. Thus, in the course of our literature review we encountered myriad lists of "benefits to experiential learners" compiled by adults. In the literature there was sparse evidence of statements by young people indicating their needs and expectations with regard to experiential education. Thus, information in this section is extracted from comments made by young people already involved in experiential programs and from an assortment of surveys and statements reflecting their needs and expectations.

Self-reports and national surveys indicate that the young are motivated by opportunities for career exploration. A study of a community-based project in McKeesport, Pennsylvania, reports that students chose Senior Semester to learn about themselves and to gain experience as a basis for career decision making.[2]

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1. National Commission for Manpower Policy, A Collection of Policy Papers Prepared for Three Regional Conferences (Washington, D. C.: U. S. Department of Labor, 1976), p. 194.

2. Office of Measurement and Evaluation, Evaluation Report for the Senior Semester Program (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh, 1976), p. 39.

Another study suggests:

> Most College Venturers are anxious to investigate a career. They want positions that at least serve as windows to career areas and if some real responsibility is thrown in, all the better.[1]

Patricia Cross, in her studies of "the new student" found that new students are positively attracted to careers and prefer to learn things that are tangible and useful.[2]

A nationwide study of career development found that over three-fourths of high school students surveyed wanted help with career planning. The needs of these students were so severe that the authors concluded:

> If we were speaking of physical development rather than of career development, we would describe American youth as hungry, malnourished, and physically retarded.[3]

Research indicated that young people really need hands-on experience with careers and with role models. The 1968 manpower report to the President indicated that 59% of 11th graders had never or only once talked with a worker in the career area of their preference.[4]

After career exploration, a restlessness to experience life and learning beyond the classroom walls seems to incline students toward experiential education. The following comments are indicative.

> High school life is so sheltered from the real world that it's not even fun. I can't say I know anything about people.[5]

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1. David Ray Papke, "College Venture: Helping the Stop-Out," Change Magazine, March 1978, p. 13.

2. Patricia Cross, Beyond the Open Door (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1976), p. 159.

3. National Institute of Education, Program Plan for Fiscal Years 1977/1978, Education and Work Group (Washington, D. C.: National Institute of Education, 1977), p. 43.

4. Ibid., p. 74.

5. National Student Volunteer Program, High School, p. 9.

Surveys sponsored by the committee for the study of National Service attest to the fact that youth give priority to preparation for stable, hopefully lucrative, employment. Experiential education responds to this expectation.

Finally, many students, particularly those from low-income families, need and expect to earn money in conjunction with their experiental learning.

Barry Heerman speaks to these socio economic related expectations as he suggests approaches to promoting postsecondary cooperative education:

> Middle class youth might best be attracted to a cooperative program if stress were laid on such educational values as social relevance, career exploration, innovation in education, or the potential for interpersonal encounters. Disadvantaged and minority youth could be encouraged to enroll by the promise of financial reward and the ability to penetrate mainstream and community life.[1]

Other student expectations which surface in the literature include a chance to make a significant contribution and an opportunity to earn graduation credit for learning outside the schoolroom.

Although the diversity of student expectations seems matched by the diversity of experiential program models, most school districts have institutionalized only one or two models. Thus, though the expectations of vocational and low income youth may be met, the needs of others not served by these skill focused or paid options may go unaddressed, i.e., those of gifted students and career explorers.

From experiential program coordinators, learners expect adequate preparation for coping at the worksite, support in dealing with work-related problems, and regular visits to their placement site.[2] Enrollees in nonpaid and vocational co-op programs expect the coordinator to find them placements related to their career interests.

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1. Heerman, Cooperative Education, p. 116.

2. Office of Measurement and Evaluation, Evaluation Report, p. 24.

> ...it worries me, high school doesn't tell anyone what they want to do. It's all a very limited scope at school--you don't feel you're educated...[1]

> I was just tired of taking courses by then. I really enjoyed working on the school play and on the yearbook staff. It makes such a difference getting to do something.[2]

The expectations of experiential programs that are held by students tend to reflect their respective needs in context. For instance, inner-city participants in the Career Internship Program seemed to be seeking a learning environment more stable and personal then that available at their home high schools.

> One gets the impression of students somehow unable to cope with the size of their schools or with the consequent lack of personal attention that they wanted but did not receive.... Most of the students said that they just grew tired of what seemed an oppressive atmosphere.[3]

Other young people, particularly those in vocational programs, expect skill training and a work record which will make them more competitive on the job market. This expectation is substantiated by comments made by student panelists at a recent conference on experiential education: Issues and Guidelines.[4]

Further, there has been a definite increase in the number of seniors choosing technical-business training and the job market over college. Many realize that they can accept immediate jobs with a set of concrete marketable skills. The youth of the late '70s are proving as pragmatic as the youth of the '60s were altruistic.

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1. National Student Volunteer Program, High School, p. 9.

2. National Association of Secondary School Principals, 25 Action Learning Schools (Reston, Va.: National Association of Secondary School Principals, 1974), p. 24.

3. Richard A. Gibboney and Associates, An Experiment in Career Education That Worked, vol. 1, Final Report of the Career Intern Program (Washington, D. C.: National Institute of Education, 1977), p. 72.

4. Rose, But for Me, pp. 30-32.

There is little documentation to reflect student expectations of community sponsors, but a prevalent satisfaction expressed by community-based learners is that they are respected and treated as adults at the worksite.[1] Another attribute of workplace sponsors which was appreciated by learners was their willingness and ability to answer questions.[2]

Numerous follow-up studies of experiential programs indicate that these programs are delivering on the expectations of young participants. Ninety-nine percent of the 104 students polled in the Senior Semester Program indicated that they learned more in their placements than they would have in school.[3]

Eighty-seven percent of 186 Experience-Based Career Education graduates reported that the program had a positive effect on their employment planning, and 82% said that participation had a positive effect on their education in general.[4]

An evaluation of the Executive High School Internship states that "as a group, the interns saw EHSI as a challenge, a satisfactory way to explore a career interest, and as a way to get away from school, and still receive credit so they could graduate."[5]

In an evaluation of the Student Internship Program in the Schools of Charlotte-Mechlenberg, North Carolina, students responded to the statement, "The internship program provided me with some training opportunities I would not have had in regular

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1. National Society for the Study of Education, Youth (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1975), p. 171.

2. Ibid., p. 35.

3. Office of Measurement and Evaluation, Evaluation Report, p. 18.

4. Ronald B. Bucknam, "The Impact of EBCE--An Evaluator's Viewpoint," Illinois Career Education Journal 33 (1976): 22-26.

5. Michael R. Crowe and Jerry P. Walker, Final Report: Evaluation of the Executive High School Internship Program (Columbus: National Center for Research in Vocational Education, 1977), p. 35.

school" at 4.76 on a 5-point scale and to "I would recommend the internship program to my friends interested in either career exploration or a learning experience out of the regular school" at the 4.84 level.[1]

Dan Conrad and Diane Hedin of the University of Minnesota Center for Youth Development and Research have documented twenty-four positive outcomes reported by 4,000 secondary students involved twenty experiential programs, 70% of which emphasized service learning. Primary growth reported by learners was in the areas of developing concern for fellow human beings and developing the ability to get things done and work with others.[2]

In spite of generally positive reports of experiences from fellow students, many young people choose to forego experiential learning. Three reasons surface: (1) A Massachusetts study by Weiner cites scheduling problems as the major reason given by students for nonparticipation.[3] (2) Nonparticipants in the McKeesport project indicated that they simply did not want to be removed from school and extracurricular activities during their senior year.[4] (3) Some secondary college-bound students believe that they must concentrate on fitting in academic courses required for college.[5]

Program graduates have offered suggestions for the improvement of specific experiential programs. An evaluation of the Vocational Exploration program revealed one significant dissatisfaction. Ninety-six of 107 students surveyed wanted more actual work

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1. Learning Institute of North Carolina, Second Annual Evaluation Report for ESEA Title IV Project "Intern Evaluation of Professional Fields" (Charlotte, N. C.: Charlotte/Mecklenburg Public School System, 1977), p. 11.

2. "Testing Claims for Service Learning," Synergist 7(1979): 28-29.

3. Ellen N. Weiner, "Work Experience in Secondary Schools: A Massachusetts Study," The Journal of Cooperative Education 14 (1978): 46-59; also see Barton, Between Two Worlds, vol. 2, p. 27.

4. Crowe, Final Report, p. 60; Office of Measurement and Evaluation, Evaluation Report, p. 2.

5. National Manpower Institute, Work and Service Experience for Youth (Washington, D. C.: National Manpower Institute, 1978), p. 12.

> Instead of doing all that talking ... they should put us to work doing or teaching us something.[1]

Some students with the Internship program in Charlotte-Mecklenberg wanted more teacher-sponsor interaction.[2]

Summary

Few studies have been done regarding student expectations of experiential education. Related surveys and evaluation reports suggest that young people have practical, career-related expectations coupled with a desire for experience beyond the classroom. From adults involved in the programs they expect information, time, and respect. Although community-based learning competes with other social and academic options, students who do elect experiential education seem to feel strongly that participation yields educational and employment-related benefits, particularly in the affective areas related to self-awareness and self-sufficiency.

Employer/Sponsors Expectations

Major factors cited by employers as incentives contributing to their participation in experiential education include the following:

- A chance to help local youth and contribute to community stability
- A source of reliable personnel for short-term needs
- An opportunity to recruit future employees and to screen for acceptable work habits, positive attitudes, and realistic expectations
- The enthusiasm and creativity young people bring to a work or service station

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1. Irving Lipkowitz, The 1977 Vocational Exploration Program--A Lesson in Work Education (New York: Public Education Association, 1977), p. 3.

2. Learning Institute of North Carolina, Second Annual Evaluation, p. 13.

- Stimulation for self-improvement given employees who serve as role models

- An opportunity to be directly involved in the education of potential workers

Employers in some industries indicate a sincere concern for lack of trained workers to fill future needs. For Western Electric in Denver, the job turnover rate among entry-level workers proved the most persuasive factor for involvement in a school-supported work experience program.[1]

An additional incentive for business involvement according to R. L. Kole, who sponsors an experiential program at Kolmar Laboratories, is "to present a positive viewpoint of industry" to youth who otherwise might be skeptical or hostile.[2]

Joseph Bertotti of General Electric cites the following benefits to his firm of participation in experiential programming.

> Work experience programs provide early identification and development of students to become qualified candidates for professional careers.
>
> Cooperative students make willing, quick-to-learn, hardworking employees and their job turnover rates are low.
>
> They require less training in permanent positions and initially progress faster than other new employees.
>
> Employers benefit through their ample opportunity to evaluate a potential full-time employee before hiring him or her after graduation.[3]

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1. U. S., Department of Commerce, Agenda for Action: A Report of the Secretary's Conference on Youth Development (Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1976), p. 71.

2. Richard Kole, Challenging World of Business, information packet (Pt. Jervis, New York: Kolmar Laboratories, 1978.)

3. Joseph Bertotti, "The Business Enterprise as an Educational Institution," New Directions for Education & Work 3 (1978): 63-71.

Finally, the recently announced tax-credit and subsidy programs have motivated some industries to involve youth. At the present time, of the few employers aware of the option,[1] many are reluctant to undertake the red tape and paperwork they assume it will entail.[2]

Organizations such as the Work-Education Councils and the National Association for Industry Education Cooperation advocate a collaborative approach to planning which includes schools, labor, business, and government. Other employers prefer to sponsor their own programs independently, free from the restrictions of school bureaucracy and government paperwork.

The National Alliance of Business (NAB) is involved in work-education programming 'to remove a serious drain on our national resources by turning the publicly-supported unemployed into productive contributors to society." NAB members now independently sponsor many work experience programs, because members found that federally funded youth programs suffered from design restrictions which made them unattractive to employers or inefficient in their operation.[3]

Employer expectations tend to differ somewhat depending on the paid/nonpaid status of the program. A sponsor committed to a nonpaid program in Los Angeles asserts:

> The student is not there to work, but to explore, to sample, to really observe. Students are exposed to seven different positions and offered an opportunity to explore two of them in greater depth.[4]

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1. Alan J. Cohen and Steven M. Frankel, Data Analysis Report: An Assessment of School-Supervised Work Education Programs (Santa Monica, Calif.: Systems Development Corporation, 1973), p. 28.

2. California State Department of Education, Work Experience Education: A Handbook for California Secondary Schools (Sacramento, Calif.: Department of Education, 1972).

3. National Alliance of Businessmen, Annual Report 1977 (Washington, D. C.: National Alliance of Businessmen, 1977), p. 8.

4. U. S. Department of Commerce, Agenda, p. 12.

Joseph Durant of General Electric elaborates on this perspective:

> It is absolutely essential that students have specific goals in mind because that is where the true reward and satisfaction come--not only for the students, but for my people working with them.[1]

Nonprofit agencies often sponsor students. They too have expectations of experiential learners as expressed by Don Bakely, Director of The Crosslines Project, in Synergist.

> (1) We need technical skill which will help us to answer some of the problems in the poverty community. (2) We need a proper attitude toward the work and the people they will serve. We find that the educational institutions are able to give them some of those technical skills, but very seldom are they able to give them the proper attitudes.[2]

There appears to be some skepticism within the business communities regarding the potential of youth to fulfill expectations. A survey of 150 businessmen by the Work-Education Council of Southeast Michigan revealed that their major reason for not including young people at the workplace was the unreliability prevalent among youth. On the other hand, 43% of the respondents said that they would hire youth because of past success with co-op programs or because they had no age preference.[3]

A survey of work experience sponsors conducted in Massachusetts indicated that inadequate monitoring and supervision of students was the major reason employers would withdraw their sponsorship. Participating employers generally desire close communication and supervisory support from program coordinators, who in particular are expected to be available for crisis intervention. Such consistent communication contributes to the value of experiential education as a learning experience for youth and a hassle-free, productive undertaking for business.

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1. Rose, But for Me, p. 20.

2. Shirley Noley, "Service Learning from the Agency's Perspective," Synergist 6 (1978): 26-27.

3. United Community Services of Metropolitan Detroit, Report of the Linkages Sub-Committee of the Metropolitan Task Force on Youth Unemployment (Detroit: United Community Services of Metropolitan Detroit, 1978), p. 18.

From the perspective of the employer/sponsor, the job of the school-based coordinator extends beyond placement. Coordinators should provide orientation for students, covering many facets of their assignments: "interaction with co-workers, being on time, staying until the end of the work day, exploring lunch-hour activities, and accepting compliments from supervisors."[1]

Ideally, coordinators should also provide training for workplace supervisors. A group of public-agency employees in Georgia, inundated with requests to accept experiential learners, has formed the Georgia Association of Field Experience Educators to assure that the needs and rights of community sponsors are addressed by experiential programmers. The National Association for Industry/Education Cooperation (NAIEC) has also been assertive in advocating orientation programs for school staff and field supervisors.

Educators, acknowledging that sponsor participation is basic to the functioning of community-based programs, are attempting to address sponsor needs while also serving learners. But realities are such that employer/sponsors often become frustrated. Don Clark of the NAIEC summarizes the difficulty:

> The education institution is heavily bureaucratized, bound to the methodology of the past and slow to adjust to emerging needs.[2]

Independent businessmen, who are able to make unilateral decisions regarding company policy, become impatient with school administrators who cannot be so flexible.

Another expectation of business is continuity. The consensus in statements from the business community is that learners should remain at one site for at least a semester, preferably a year. It takes time for students to gain a true understanding of the setting, to make a productive contribution for the pay they receive.

Some sponsors, particulary of nonpaid learners, cite awkward confrontations with interns who harbor hopes of being hired when, in actuality, no positions are available.

> They may hesitate to accept students, especially seniors, unless it is made clear that a field placement is not a promise of

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1. Rose, But for Me, p. 38.

2. National Commission for Manpower Policy, A Collection, p. 92.

> employment after graduation. There are instances where a job is offered to an exceptionally competent student who is lucky enough to graduate just as a vacancy occurs in an agency. But it is unfair to everyone concerned if job-seeking expectations are not clarified at the outset.[1]

A final expectation, of particular concern to sponsors in human services is that of confidentiality. Fearing that an indiscreet intern may betray the confidence of a patient or of the Board of Directors, sponsors are sometimes reluctant to take on experiential learners. Impeccable discretion is expected of learners serving as human-service or executive interns.

In spite of these concerns, many industries and agencies have already institutionalized participation in community-based education.

The results of a survey of 104 respondents from business and labor reported by the Education Commission of the States indicates:

> Some businesses are making community involvement a matter of company policy. Of the respondents who indicated that company policies were the cause of their initial involvement in career education, the overwhelming majority also expressed a personal concern about the need for the private sector to assist in the education of youth. Some pointed to the need for developing skilled employees to meet projected labor needs. As one respondent put it, 'I see this [involvement in career education] as being essential, in a preliminary sense, to meeting the long-range manpower needs of the industry in our state.'[2]

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1. Susan Ellis, "Agency Volunteer Directors Voice Issues, Concerns, New Project Ideas," Synergist 5 (1977): 40.

2. Education Commission of the States, Collaboration in State Career Education Policy Development: The Role of Business, Industry and Labor (Denver: Education Commission of the States, 1979), p. 32.

Employer/sponsors for the most part seem satisfied with their program experiences. Three-fourths of sponsors of EHSIP students indicated that they would consider hiring their interns as full- or part-time employees and that they would continue to work with the program.[1] Of 202 EBCE resource persons surveyed, 94% said they would continue affiliation with the program.[2] Employers of vocational co-op students queried in a study by Lewis in 1976 felt that program participation reduced their recruiting costs and gave them the opportunity to assess prospective employees.[3]

The literature reveals two circumstances under which business and industry might be inclined to withdraw from participation in experiential education programs. First, sponsors with paid programs indicate that they might withdraw in a recession situation--feeling an obligation to hire adults first. On the other hand, such a situation could increase the availability of nonpaid placements. Also, many employers state candidly that if experiential learners prove to be uncooperative, unreliable, or unprepared they will cease participation, believing the effort to be an unjustifiable drain on employees and/or the organization.

Summary

Factors motivating employer/sponsors to affiliate with experiential learning programs include a desire to assist youngsters in the community; a need to hire reliable, motivated personnel for entry-level positions; an interest in recruiting new employees; and the opportunity to improve the business image among youth. The expectations of participants vary somewhat depending on the paid/nonpaid or voluntary nature of the placement.

Generally employer/sponsors expect reliable interns with some affective skills. From coordinators they expect supervisory support and, in some cases, student and/or sponsor orientation. From the school, they would appreciate more flexibility, especially in the realm of scheduling.

Employer/sponsors of experiential learners express substantial satisfaction with their program-related experiences. Reservations cited by a few sponsors emanate from a concern for confidentiality and an inability to hire learners hoping for permanent employment.

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1. Crowe, Current Status, p. 54.

2. Bucknam, "The Impact of EBCE," p. 24.

3. Crowe, Current Status, p. 65.

Citations in the literature suggest that some firms would cease to participate in the event of a recession or if the quality of experiential learners were to decline so much that extensive supervision would be required.

The School Administrators' Expectations

For experiential education to become institutionalized and readily available to youth presumes that programs have the attention and support of the school administration. The needs and expectations of high school principals reflect a broad range of constituencies and pressures. Community-based programs have addressed these needs on many fronts--from facilitating integration in a magnet school context to providing enrichment for frustrated gifted students. Realizing the potential of experiential education, the National Association of Secondary School Principals has recommended the fostering of such programs as a national priority. In Secondary Schools in a Changing Society: This we Believe, the Association proposes:

> The current tendency to equate education with reading a book or working in a laboratory should be redirected, so that community-based learning is accepted as a partner of classroom-based learning. The purpose of this thrust is not for vocational training or job orientation, although these may be by-products. The purpose of community-based learning is to offer youth a wide variety of opportunities to learn in the public world to test theory with practice, to assume a partnership with adults to deliver upon responsibilities of consequence, to gain a mutuality with other age and ethnic groups to participate in solving problems rather than merely talking about solutions, and to gain a greater understanding of the possibilities and limitations of society's institutions and the people they serve.[1]

These principals expect experiential education to provide youth a transitionary experience toward responsible adulthood

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1. National Association of Secondary School Principals, Secondary Schools in a Changing Society: This We Believe (Reston, Va.: National Association of Secondary School Principals, 1975), p. 18.

in addition to an opportunity for real learning. Job training and career exploration are valued by them as by-products of the process.

> Administrators were motivated to adopt the program because it was perceived as an alternative to regular school programs--an alternative where interns were exposed to the real world of work, had regular contact with adults in roles other than educators and had the opportunity to explore a career interest and learn some technical skills.[1]

However, major hopes of principals for experiential education are centered in its potential for aiding youth in the transition to adulthood. They are concerned about the age ghettoism that is prevalent at the high school, the concentration of young people in an isolated environment which deprives them of the opportunity to experience life beyond the dictates of pervasive peer pressure. Administrators are interested in the potential of experiential education to support youth as they attain an adulthood characterized by freedom but also by difficult realities. The National Association of Secondary School Principals in its publication, The 12th Grade: A Critical Year, proposes:

> A twelfth-grade program composed of fixed requirements, large classes, and hall passes obviously provides no helpful transition to looser kinds of structures. A student must become gradually accustomed to assuming responsibility and making his own decisions if he expects to be able to adjust to greater freedom after graduation. This means schools must restructure their 12th grade programs if they are to be a valuable testing ground.[2]

Secondarily, the NAASP does acknowledge a career education expectation of experiential learning.

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1. Crowe, Final Report, p. 96.

2. National Association of Secondary School Principals, The 12th Grade: A Critical Year (Reston, Va.: National Association of Secondary School Principals, 1975), p. 14.

> Most high schools obviously lack the manpower and funds to provide adequate job training on their own. Cooperation among high schools, colleges, employers, parents, and students must be fostered in order to provide enough resources to assure a good career education.[1]

Relevant to drop-out and attendance problems principals hope:

> Experience in the outside world would provide the motivation for a student to take classroom courses to correct skill deficiencies or to complete the requirements for a diploma.[2]

Regarding graduation requirements, principals bemoan the fact that many school districts have reduced the number of courses required for graduation and that seniors are often left with only two required courses to complete in the senior year. Frequently, credited community experiences serve as a pressure valve for seniors chafing at the schoolhouse door.[3]

But principals do harbor some reservations. Business must not "take over" the schools to emphasize employability training as opposed to general education. Administrators are responsible to their faculties, who are somewhat suspicious when non-certified workers assume an educational role "which educators could not handle."[4]

Principals expect to have jurisdiction over a process for which they are ultimately accountable to the community. Especially in situations where schools are granting graduation credit for experiences, the administrator needs assurance that students are indeed learning.

> The administrator must remain accountable for student performance, employer performance, and the general success of

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1. National Association of Secondary School principals, The 12th Grade, p. 29.

2. Ibid., p. 35.

3. Ibid., p. 5.

4. Sockol, School/Business Partnerships, p. 23.

> the program. The schools must evaluate whatever training for academic credit industries provide to make sure that the industries are serving the needs of students and not simply their own interests.[1]

Administrators identify the most cumbersome aspects of experiential education (those which modulate their enthusiasm for programs) as the scheduling of experiences, the allotment of credit, and budgetary compensation for students not in attendance at the building. In spite of the impetus provided by CETA Youth Program mandates, many educators believe that students receiving credit and salary for work experience are being doubly compensated. There is also the awkward question of measuring competencies gained. Furthermore, community-based and school-based programs often compete for students during the school day. Teachers often view experiential education as a threat to enrollment in in-school elective offerings. This competitive situation is not conducive to collaborative programming. Finally, many schools receive monies based on their average daily attendance (ADA) and that, only during the nine-month school year. Schools are often not compensated for youngsters outside the building during the school year or for those involved in school-sponsored programs during the summer. Administrators plagued by financial instability are necessarily circumspect in advocating field-based programs requiring additional staff or money.

In spite of these constraining conditions, school administrators voice general satisfaction regarding the extent to which experiential education is meeting their specific needs and expectations. Such satisfaction is evidenced in an NASSP publication, 25 Action Learning Schools.

These same administrators acknowledge that their recommendations are subject to the judgments of an unpredictable public.

> The conflicting desires and values of a highly personalistic, pluralistic larger society press upon secondary schools. A variety of expectations explode. Pressures build to move in one direction, then another as counteracting forces grow.[2]

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1. National Association of Secondary School Principals, The 12th Grade, p. 30.

2. National Association of Secondary School Principals, 25 Action, p. 6.

But Scott Thomson, Deputy Executive Director of the NASSP, predicts a more stable future for experiential education:

> While priorities do shift from year to year, the growth of experiential education reflects more fundamental changes in society, such as the inability of youth to gain real-life experiences in suburban and urban settings unless it is organized by the school and included in the school's program.[1]

The major expectations of administrators with regard to experiential education are grounded in the administrators' understandings of student and community needs, for it is the ultimate responsibility of the principal to fulfill the expectations of the school community. Principals perceive that experiential education may in many cases fill the gap between what the schools are expected to do and what they are able to do within current fiscal and legal confines.

> The desired outcome from a community perspective would be a more effective program resulting in improved attendance, a lower drop-out rate, and testimonials of appreciation from students and industry. Ultimately the improved program should result in active support of the schools generally by the public, according to Scott Detrick of the National School Boards Association.[2]

Summary

High school principals, whose views are represented in the publications of the National Association of Secondary School Principals, assertively advocate experiential learning as a vehicle through which young people can effect a transition to adulthood and acquire career education. Principals express hope that community experience may inspire some students to value basic skills and to complete high school.

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1. Scott Thomson, interview in The Report Card, Spring 1979, pp. 1-2.

2. Richard J. Miguel, Deborah D. Coleman, and Louise E. Wasson, "Experiential Education Issues and Guidelines," mimeographed (Columbus: National Center for Research in Vocational Education, 1978), p. 97.

Principals cite funding programs, awarding credit for activities, and scheduling experiences around the school day as factors which complicate the implementation of experiential education.

Although personally committed to the concept, principals concede that ultimately experiential education will have to compete in the crowded marketplace of community priorities for education.

The Coordinators' Expectations

It is difficult in reading comments made by program coordinators to discriminate between coordinator expectations and program policy. Statements by coordinators effusively highlight the responsibilities of students and sponsors, but often these statements are more representative of program guidelines than of coordinator expectations. Our goal in reviewing statements by coordinators of experiential programs was to identify conditions which would contribute to their continued commitment to and successful conduct of field-based programs. Therefore, we asked from coordinators, "What do you need and expect in order to do your job well? We were also interested in establishing the motivations of individuals drawn to careers as coordinators and so we asked, "What were your expectations as you opted for a career in experiential education?"

Retrospective comments by current experiential education coordinators reveal two major incentives for their initial interest in community-based learning. The vast majority of coordinators, former classroom teachers, sought more physical and professional flexibility. They reported a growing frustration with limitations imposed by classroom walls and departmental curricula.

K. Otto Logan reports on a survey made of cooperative coordinators in Utah: "... what coordinators like most about the cooperative program is its uniqueness. It presents an opportunity to work closely with downtown businessmen. It offers a good combination of theory and practice."[1]

Michael Crowe interviewed coordinators during his evaluation of the Executive High School Internships Program. He observed:

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1. Center for Vocational Education, Guidelines for Cooperative Education and Selected Materials from the National Seminar Held August 1-5, 1966 (Columbus: Center for Vocational Education, 1967), p. 130.

"... the coordinators enjoy the challenge of the job. They like the diverse activities of recruiting interns and sponsors, conducting seminars, and providing personal counseling to interns."[1]

Individuals attracted to coordinator positions often are interested in establishing more reciprocal, less authoritarian relationships with students. This incentive is described by Barbara Shoup, a coordinator-writer with Learning Unlimited: "... the teacher becomes less a lecturer, grader, and disciplinarian and more a facilitator, guide, and partner....these new student-teacher relationships break down traditional barriers between adolescents and adults. Teacher and student alike have the freedom to go about the business of teaching and learning."[2]

Potential coordinators are attracted by the promise of something different for themselves and the hope of something better for their students.

Comments made by coordinators with regard to their myriad job responsibilities indicate that experiential program coordinators have little time to write or publish statements of their expectations as educational professionals involved in experiential programming.[3] Their comments also reflect a sense of frustration with the coordinator's job description which seems a dumping ground for assorted tasks not assumed by other school personnel--everything from teaching basic skills to serving as a liaison with the Rotary and Kiwanis. They assert that: There is not enough time available within the regular work week to perform, to a satisfactory minimum, all the tasks incorporated in the coordinator's job description and other responsibilities meted out by superiors.

Individuals holding part-time assignments as experiential program coordinators were particularly discouraged. "None of the career exploration coordinators (surveyed) devote 100% of their time to this one program. They are more likely than any other type of program (sic) to feel that the organization and staffing of their program is not effective for achieving program goals."[4]

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1. Crowe, Final Report, p. 37.

2. Barbara J. Shoup, Living and Learning for Credit (Bloomington, Ind.: Phi Delta Kappa, 1978), p. 14.

3. Paul Pratt, "What Constitutes a True Coordinator Load--A Case Study," Journal of Cooperative Education 14 (1978): 5-13.

4. Cohen, Data Analysis Report, p. 46.

In the course of our literature review we sought coordinator statements delineating optimal learner/coordinator ratios and feasible teaching-coordinating schedules. We also searched for coordinator opinions regarding relationships with the business community and school policy affecting program implementation. We encountered recommendations that staffing ratios should be based upon (1) the number of students participating in the program, (2) the type of students participating, (3) the geographical spread of job stations, (4) the kinds of ancillary duties performed by the work-experience staff, and (5) the types of placements.[1] It was also suggested that coordinators be hired as certification staff, not as aides; and that the learning coordinator be given an opportunity to define learning objectives.[2]

Nowhere did we encounter a definitive statement by coordinators of minimal conditions for effective program implementation. We solicited such statements from the secondary coordinators Cooperative Work Experience Education Association and from the postsecondary Association for Cooperative Education. Neither organization had developed a "welfare statement" clarifying the needs and expectations of member coordinators. Further, though coordinators tend to issue questionnaires to program clients for evaluation purposes, they rarely respond themselves. For this reason survey responses available from other groups were not available for coordinators.

The California Association of Work Experience Educators, which includes vocational educators and coordinators of career-exploration programs, has issued a suggested curriculum for Work-Experience Education and has recommended standards for personnel hired to coordinate programs.[3]

The sparse literature conveys the general impression that advocates of experiential education are not in a marketing phase. Coordinators have produced literature rife with examples of benefits to students and employers; but the impression is

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1. Grady Kimbrell and Ben S. Vineyard, Strategies for Implementing Work Experience Programs (Bloomington, Ill.: McKnight Publishers, 1975), p. 23; Pratt, "What Constitutes," p. 12.

2. Shoup, Living and Learning, p. 55; Robert Sigmon, "Service Learning: Three Principles," Synergist 8 (1979): 9-11.

3. California Association of Work Experience Educators, Position Paper on Education and Work Experience Education (Fremont, Calif.: California Association of Work Experience Educators, 1977).

that they do not yet find their roles sufficiently stable or their programs sufficiently institutionalized to risk an issuance of their own welfare statements.

What are coordinator expectations of other program constituents? Expectations vary with the clientele and the stated objectives of the specific experiential education program. Coordinators generally issue to new enrollees program guidelines (often called student responsibilities) which are designed to clarify expectations and to prevent incidents potentially damaging to the program.

General expectations for enrollees throughout all field-based models are punctuality, honesty, appropriate grooming, and a cooperative attitude.[1] These prevailing expectations are basic to program survival.

> Students who take on the responsibilities entailed in a community-based program must understand the commitment they make to themselves, their school and the resource people who agree to help them. Forgotten appointments, slipshod work, and poor preparation are inexcusable. Students guilty of these habits are not only wasting resource people's time, but also give a bad impression of alternative education in general.[2]

Coordinators evidence a conflict between commitment to individual students and commitment to program survival. For example, to give a chance to the marginal youngster, who perhaps stands to benefit most from community experiences, may threaten the continued cooperation of the employer/sponsor and perhaps the reputation of the program.

From employers/sponsors, coordinators have expectations congruent with the objectives of their respective programs. The California Association of Work Experience Educators believe that learners should be aware that employers are expected to:

- pay a fair wage
- establish satisfactory working conditions

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1. Crowe, Final Report, p. 11.

2. Shoup, Living and Learning, p. 59.

- display a humanistic management behavior
- provide a fair opportunity for advancement or promotion
- provide for a full understanding of company benefits
- use fair evaluation techniques and explanation
- convey a full understanding of expected dress standards
- convey a full understanding of the team work necessary in order to have a fulfilling job experience
- provide necessary and continuing training for both current and new employees
- provide a position with reasonable security
- provide a position with some feeling of worth
- obey labor laws[1]

Coordinator expectations from community sponsors with the EBCE program are different, perhaps emanating from the fact that young participants are not paid. EBCE coordinators have the following expectations of employer/sponsors:

- answering questions about the work situation to help the student complete activities in the Student Career Guide
- helping the student work on activity sheets involved in completing site-related projects
- filling out a Student Evaluation Form to assess the student's progress and record attendance
- providing the student with special types of tutoring and demonstration in specific areas of expertise[2]

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1. California Association of Work Experience Educators, Position Paper, p. 5.

2. National Institute of Education, A Comparison of Four Experience-Based Career Education Programs (Washington, D. C.: National Institute of Education, 1976), p. 20.

The director of a student volunteer program recommends to sponsors as follows:

> Instead of organizing projects and assigning roles, the adult leader draws from the young people their own talents and helps them assume the role of decision-maker. It is essential that adults in youth-participation programs create an environment of trust where young people are not afraid to assert themselves, to take chances, and even to fail. Most of all these adults must communicate their faith that young people can act effectively.[1]

The expectation here is that the sponsor serve as a supportive role model.

In addition to specific program objectives coordinators generally expect participating sponsors to be supportive of students and sensitive to their learning needs; to provide meaningful work; and to participate in student evaluation.

Barbara Shoup aptly describes the coordinator's position with regard to expectations:

> It is crucial that each party in the internship relationship be well aware of the other's expectations; the student should know what the resource person needs from him in terms of scheduling and responsibilities; the resource person needs to know exactly what the student hopes to gain from his experience. A contract clarifies these commitments....[2]

From school administrators coordinators need both moral and fiscal support for experiential education, knowing full well that it is generally the principal who determines whether a program flourishes or is cut at the building level. Coordinators have the right to expect administrators not to treat programs as dumping grounds for those students who cannot cope with the in-school programs.[3]

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1. Mary Conway Kohler, "Guest Speaker," Synergist 5 (1978): i.

2. Shoup, Living and Learning, p. 31.

3. Ibid., p. 49.

According to program evaluation reports, nurturing administrative support is a major challenge for coordinators, since administrators seem to have many priorities of which experiential education is sometimes the least important. Convincing administrators that experiential education may constitute a solution to other pressing priorities seems to be the strategy many coordinators adopt to preserve their programs.[1]

According to the Research for Better Schools Model of the EBCE program, coordinators expect the following from parents of experiential learners:

- articulation of program concerns to the school administration
- help for students in bridging the gap between learning in school and learning in the community
- help in relating the program to other groups within the community
- help in recruiting community participants
- provision of social activities for students[2]

and from the Senior Semester Coordinators the expectations from parents are as follows:

- to facilitate the transition from child-parent to adult-parent relationship for participating students
- to enhance parent appreciation and support for the basic assumption that youth (age 16-18) should spend a significant part of their formal education among adults in the community[3]

Coordinators of vocational education and employment and training programs hold expectations more related to the requirements of the workplace, although in this area also they expect parental

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1. Crowe, Final Report, p. 104.

2. National Institute of Education, A Comparison of Four, p. 37.

3. Office of Measurement and Evaluation, Evaluation Report, p. 36.

support in influencing young participants to be reliable, punctual, and cooperative at their placements.

Some program coordinators encourage parents to participate by being community resources--especially those involved in careers of interest to students.

The influence of parents as program advocate is highly valued by coordinators.

> Parents can play a crucial role in combatting hostility that threatens the existence of alternative education programs. A strong contingent of tax-paying parents who vociferously demand that the educational system provide for the needs of all its students can usually gain the attention of elected school board officials.[1]

An occupational hazard cited by coordinators stems from the fact that they operate on a flexible schedule and thus get the reputation as "the person who has the job everyone wants because it is so easy. Eventually he [sic] foregoes the privilege of using the teachers' lounge for fear his colleagues will say he has nothing to do."[2]

This description notwithstanding, coordinators are able to cite some conditions which interfere with their job satisfaction.

Off-Campus Problems:

- Employers say that laws are too restrictive and [that] it is just too much trouble to fill out the forms.
- [There is] too much competition from adjoining school districts and community colleges, all competing for the same jobs.
- We have no public transportation to take kids to their jobs.

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1. Shoup, Living and Learning, p. 99.

2. Brnt P. Wolf, "So You Want to be a Work Experience Coordinator," American Vocational Journal 53 (1978): 66-67.

On-Campus Problems:

- [There is] too much office trivia to take care of.
- [A] large percentage of the student population is taking four-year college requirements.
- There is only marginal support from counselors, vocational teachers, and at the district level.
- I can't make decisions and keep them at my level; too many others are involved.[1]

Summary

Coordinators enter the experiential education field (usually from classroom teaching) in search of increased flexibility and sanction to utilize learning environments outside the classroom. Many are interested in developing facilitator/counselor relationships with learners.

Coordinator expectations of learners are ostensibly described in statements of program objectives, but their basic expectation is that the young people conduct themselves in such a responsible manner at the community site that the placement and the program will be preserved and kept available to future learners. Coordinators consider employer/sponsors in varying lights--as learning mentors, as supportive role models, or as employer/trainers--depending on the purpose of the respective program. From parents, they appreciate interest in and public advocacy for the program. From building administrators, they hope for budgetary and political support when building priorities are established.

Coordinators apparently enjoy their work (they rarely petition for reassignment to the classroom), but many complain that the position has evolved as a catch-all for sundry rehabilitation and public-relations responsibilities.

Parents' Expectations

The limited research into the parent expectations of experiential education has been conducted at the conclusion of the

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1. California State Department of Education, Work Experience Education, p. 33.

programs in conjunction with evaluation studies. There is little evidence to indicate that parents are consulted about their expectations during the planning stages of the program.

Coordinators who have tried to keep parents informed of and (more optimistically) involved in program activities have encountered mixed results. They have found parents either very interested in becoming informed or inclined to relegate educational decisions to their youngsters, teachers, and guidance counselors.[1] Although parents are not inclined to be involved in planning, surveys show that parents of enrollees feel strongly that programs should provide their offspring with work experience and first-hand knowledge about careers.[2]

Other parents look to experiential education as an alternative for their bored or frustrated high school students.[3]

The College Venture program reports that parents of community-based learners felt relieved to know that their youngsters of college age were involved in an educationally sanctioned program and were therefore more willing to give support to the "stopping out."[4]

The priority of parents is still with academic learning, and their overriding priority is the youngster's graduation, be it from high school or college. Parents are particularly supportive of programs that may, in addition to providing career education, enhance the student's chances of getting that diploma.[5]

Parents polled by various program evaluators seemed overwhelmingly satisfied that programs were meeting their expectations. Senior Semester parents almost unanimously rated the program as "good," "great," or "wonderful"--probably because Senior Semester provided the learners practical experience and firsthand knowledge about careers.[6] Ninety percent of parents of

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1. Office of Measurement and Evaluation, Evaluation Report, p. 14; Henry Pope, "Parent Attitudes Toward Cooperative Education," The Journal of Cooperative Education 15 (1979):35-40.

2. Ibid. and Crowe, Final Report, p. 33.

3. Office of Measurement and Evaluation, Evaluation Report, p. 14.

4. Papke, "College Venture," p. 13.

5. Gibboney, An Experiment in Career Education, p. 85.

6. Office of Measurement and Evaluation, Evaluation Report, p. 14.

EBCE participants said they would want their children to participate again. The program was judged highly effective by 631 parents (95%), and 32 of them considered it somewhat effective in making students more aware of career opportunities.[1]

Seventy-one percent of parents commenting on the Internship Program at Charlotte-Mecklenberg High School reported that their son or daughter had learned a lot from the program. All fifty-five of the parents polled would have their students enroll again.[2]

Nevertheless, parents do have concerns regarding community-based learning, and primary among these concerns seems to be the fear that a field experience may detract from attention to academic coursework.[3]

Parents as a group do not believe that experiential education will aid their youngsters in getting into college, and so parents with collegiate aspirations for their children tend to be reluctant at times to advocate participation.[4]

Finally, a strategic concern mentioned by parents was transportation. Often learners have to cope with awkward bus transfers, depend on their parents, or buy a car.

Summary

Parents are usually not involved in the decision made by their youngsters to enroll for community-based activities. The parents who are aware and supportive of the decision expect that their offspring will benefit through access to information and experience that will aid in career decision-making. Some parents view experiential education as an acceptable and promising alternative which will keep nonacademic youngsters at least loosely affiliated with formal schooling.

Major concerns voiced by parents are that field experiences may distract youngsters from their academic responsibilities and that time spent at community placements may preclude enrollment in college prep courses. However, since parents of program graduates express such enthusiastic satisfaction with growth made by their youngsters through experiential education, it would seem that these concerns rarely materialize.

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1. Buckman, "The Impact of EBCE," p. 24.

2. Learning Institute of North Carolina, Second Annual Evaluation, p. 30.

3. Learning Institute of North Carolina, Second Annual Evalution, p. 17; see also note 2; and, Pope, "Parent Attitudes," p. 37.

4. National Manpower Institute, Work and Service Experience for Youth (Washington, D.C.: National Manpower Institute, 1978):12.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Selection of Geographic Areas

Data for this study were gathered through a series of face-to-face interviews conducted in the spring of 1979. Interviews took place in four states--Ohio, California, Florida, and Massachusetts. These states were selected to reflect a balanced geographic distribution in keeping with research done by Getzels indicating that expectations of education differ by region in the United States.[1]

A secondary rationale for the selection of these particular states was that they represent four diverse approaches to experiential education programming. In Florida, program development is generally initiated and supported as a result of commitment within the county school district. In Ohio, vocational educators have become involved in the implementation of programs on a state-wide level. In Massachusetts, community agencies and councils have taken strong leadership in designing and sponsoring options in experiential learning. And, in California, the California Association of Work Experience Educators has been assertive in advocating its views on work experience education. The leadership of this organization, coupled with the proverbial variety of experiential education options available in that state, led us to select California as our western component. The goal was to identify a cross-section of programs which would reflect the philosophical and strategic diversity encompassed under the rubric of experiential education. Communities within these states were selected by researchers based on the diversity of experiential programs available within an immediate geographic radius. Although our "n" is small, four states of fifty, we believe the geographical and philosophical distribution to be sufficiently representative that the data from the interviews can be generalized to experiential programs in other states.

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1. Jacob W. Getzels, James M. Lipham, and Roald F. Campbell, Educational Administration as a Social Process (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1968), p. 168-69.

Selection of Programs

For purposes of this study, experiential education programs are defined as follows: programs which place students in workplace settings where they interact with adults, learn skills, explore careers, gain work experience, and earn money and/or high school credit. The eighteen programs considered in this study were selected on the basis of their conformity to the definition.

Selection was not made at random. This study was conducted in conjunction with a project to identify a typology for the classification of experiential education projects. The study mandated the investigation of a cross-section of program types. Approximately one-third of the programs surveyed were drawn from forty exemplary projects abstracted in Experiential Education: A Primer on Programs.[2] These were programs located in the four targeted states. Other programs were selected to complete the range required by the typology study with consideration given to stability and proximity to other interview sites.

Because some programs were previously identified as exemplary, and others selected with an eye to stability, respondents' comments may reflect a greater degree of sophistication and satisfaction than would those emanating from participants in fledgling or less acclaimed programs. Still, we believe that the comments and conclusions with regard to participant expectations are generalizable to secondary experiential education programs within the following categories: youth employability programs, cooperative vocational education programs, experience-based academic programs, private sector intern programs, service learning programs, and general work experience programs.

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1. Richard J. Miguel, An Exploratory Study of the Work-Centered and Person-Centered Dimension of Experiential Education: Implications for a Typology of Programs (Columbus: National Center for Research in Vocational Education, 1980).

2. Louise E. Wasson, Experiential Education: A Primer on Programs (Columbus: National Center for Research in Vocational Education, 1979).

Selection of Interviewees

Several target groups were interviewed:

Students from age fourteen to nineteen involved in experiential education programs

Workplace based employers or sponsors of experiential learners

Principals of schools offering experiential education

Coordinators of experiential education programs

Parents of learners in experiential education programs

These groups were selected because they provide the participation and support which is critical to the effectiveness and survival of experiential education. Researchers hypothesized that to the extent that the expectations of these participants were met, programs would stabilize and flourish.

The number of individuals interviewed from each group roughly reflects that group's representation in the total participant population--i.e., more students than employers were interviewed, more employers than principals. At a typical program site researchers met with five students, two employers, one coordinator, usually one principal, and ideally with two parents. Representative numbers of parents were not interviewed because they were often not accessible to researchers.

Data-Collection Procedures

Interviews were conducted in March, April, and May of 1979. They were scheduled in the spring in order to assure that participants, having had maximum experience with their respective programs, would be able to contribute informed responses.

With two exceptions interviewers spent one full day with each program. Appointments with participants were scheduled in advance for the designated day.

In advance of each site visit, the principal interviewer contacted by telephone the coordinator of each program selected for the study, and a site visitation date was selected which was mutually feasible. The coordinator then organized the interviewer's agenda for that day, including appointments with

students, employer/sponsors, building principals, parents, and with the coordinators themselves. Students were generally interviewed in small groups of two to seven. Other constituents were questioned individually. Interviews were conducted in shops, hospitals, museums, banks, offices, restaurants, wherever those participating were available. Data at fifteen of the eighteen program sites were collected by two interviewers, alternately asking questions and recording responses. The remaining three sites were covered by one of the two interviewers.

Data for the related study, An Exploratory Study of the Work-Centered and Person-Centered Dimension of Experiential Education: Implications for a Typology of Programs,[1] were collected concurrently with information of this study. One interview schedule was developed to cover the research questions posed by both studies.

The interview schedule was piloted and subsequently revised on the basis of participant responses in the three Ohio-based experiential education programs. Respondents from these programs were again contacted for supplementary information after the interview schedule had been finalized. Questions for this study were open-ended. They were slightly adjusted to fit the perspective of each respondent group.

> Question for student: What motivated you to enroll in this experiential program?
>
> Question for employer/sponsor: What initially motivated you to get involved as an employer/ sponsor with this program?

The basic questions posed by the study were the following:

1. What motivated you to become involved in this experiential education program?
2. How do you (your firm, the school) expect to benefit from involvement in this program?
3. What services or behaviors do you expect of others--i.e., students, coordinators, school principal?
4. Are your expectations being met?
5. If your expectations are being met, what circumstances might compel you to withdraw from participation?

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1. Miguel, An Exploratory Study.

Limitations of the Study

Educational researchers conducting qualitative studies are vulnerable to the foibles of human subjects and the realities of field conditions. This study did not escape such influences. Interviewees were selected by program coordinators. This fact would suggest a selection bias in favor of successful, satisfied respondents. Actually, as the interviews progressed it became apparent that availability, more than coordinator preference, was often the mitigating force in the ultimate selection of the participants interviewed. Here, too, another aspect of selection bias may have been introduced.

Respondents were aware that they were participating in a study, and many initially believed that their programs were being evaluated. The interviewers were definite in explaining that they were seeking information and not conducting an evaluation. Although responses were generally positive, the question "Are your expectations being met?" elicited many suggestions for improvement, indicating that individuals were generally candid in their comments. When possible, interviewers triangulated responses to cross-check the validity of information.

Instrumentation effects may have influenced responses in the various interview contexts. Although interviewers attempted to maintain consistency in the wording and presentation of their questions, the open-ended nature of the interviews was not conducive to a structured format. However, we feel that what may have been lost in experimental consistency was compensated for in spontaneous, sincere commentary.

Presentation of Data

The responses of the respective participant groups are consolidated with reference to each research question. That is, the responses of all students, employer/sponsors, principals, coordinators, and parents to each research question are stratified, assessed, and presented sequentially. This format was selected because it best accentuates instances of congruence and conflict in inter-group response patterns.

This is a study of expectations and attitudes; and, as such, it is not amenable to quantitative methodologies. It was not the intent of the researcher to report response-frequency counts. However, for purposes of indicating the magnitude and significance of responses from the various cohorts, aggregated comments are generally presented in the text in order of descending frequency. In cases where this practice was not followed, the author has so indicated. Quotations cited are

drawn from extensive interview data collected. In the interest of brevity, we were able to select for inclusion only the most representative and thought-provoking statements. Our conclusions are based on a depth of data reflected in, but not included in, the research report.

In the initial pilot interviews the questions "How do you expect to benefit from the program?" and "Have your expectations been fulfilled?" elicited no useful information when addressed to program coordinators. For this reason, these questions were not included in later coordinator interviews nor do the data presentation sections related to these questions include responses from program coordinators.

The data analysis section is devoted to isolating major incentives for participation, identifying complementary and conflicting expectations, establishing major areas of satisfaction and frustration, and extrapolating on major external threats to program survival.

CHAPTER IV

INTERVIEW DATA

To provide the reader a feeling for the content and tenor of the interview data upon which were based the conclusions and recommendations in Chapter V, we include the following selected quotations.

What Motivated You to Become Involved in Experiential Education?

This section presents the major incentives for involvement in experiential education as reported by students, employer/sponsors, principals, coordinators, and parents.

Learners

> I was looking for a job. This was convenient because it was all set up by the school. I didn't even know about the learning; now I think the experience might be worth more to me than the salary.
>
> - CETA program participant

> My mother is happy about the job because we need the money. My sister and I give half of our money to her.
>
> - CETA program participant

> I joined this program to get out of boring classes. I would just sit in the back and say nothing. I needed to get out of that slump, but I just couldn't see any point in all those classes.
>
> - work experience education student

> I couldn't take being a nothing at that big high school.
>
> - magnet program student

> I was going to major in architecture in college. I had had drafting in school but my knowledge of the field was pretty limited. I needed some real experience before I made a decision.
>
> - private sector intern

Employers/Sponsors

A D.E. kid came in one day and asked me if he could work. He worked out fine; now I continue to hire through the program. I get better results with them because a school grade and credit are at stake.

-restaurant manager

I want to give these guys a break; the college prep kids get all the breaks in school.

- shop foreman

When I was 14 someone helped me like this; I thought I could repay that favor by passing it on.

- bank vice-president

If more businesses would do this, we wouldn't have kids protesting. People in academia are giving kids the wrong impression of business.

- bank vice-president

School is so theoretical; young people need exposure to the realities of pressure, production, and costing.

- hospital administrator

School Principals

Our students either need the money for college or need to be prepared for work when they graduate. The program serves both groups.

Tuition at our school was going up; parents could not afford tuition and food on the table. Students in the program can pay their own tuition now.

Actually more vocational training is out-of-date by the time the kids graduate. This way our kids get access to the latest equipment and techniques.

It's a viable educational option for kids who aren't making it here. Some of the kids who were driving us nuts are getting rave reviews on the job.

Many of our kids must work to support themselves and their children. If our program were not available, they would drop out.

Our kids want to know what careers are really like. There's no way we in the building could provide the career education they are getting.

Coordinators

As a teacher I couldn't really treat and prescribe for kids individually; as a coordinator I can do that.

I believe that experience is the best teacher. As a coordinator, I can really act on that belief.

In graduate school I was an advisor for undeclared majors. I saw how unprepared those young people were for making career decisions.

I was in business before I got my teaching degree. When I found out about this program, I thought it would be a way of taking advantage of my business experience.

Like the kids, I guess I like the action and variety. The day goes faster than when I had a straight teaching schedule.

Parents

Teenagers have such expensive needs. We were glad that she could earn money for the things she wants so badly.

I wanted him to learn some skills and get some work experience. Jobs are hard to come by today and the school program is free.

He was in this awful slump. He needed something different from just going from class to class.

We knew that having the experience on her record would help her get into medical school.

How Do You Expect to Benefit from Experiential Education?

During the pilot phase of the study, it became apparent that the benefits participants were expecting from experiential education had changed and expanded from the motivations cited at the time of their initial involvement.

Learners

I have been a bag boy, a construction worker, and a gas station attendant, but those were just jobs. Here it's organized so I'm learning. The program is to get ahead, to get a lifetime job not just short-term stuff.

- cooperative vocational student

I am getting more confident. Here I have to make decisions; at school, the teachers told me what to do.
- cooperative vocational student

This program teachers you how to be an adult. The only place I feel like a kid now is in my English class. But, now I understand why the teachers have to treat you that way in school--you know, it's more efficient.
- distributive education student

I really hope I'll get a job. I know a lot of kids who got hired after their experience.
- service learner

I'll be able to make a better career decision. I ask advice about careers from other workers.
- private sector intern

I would have dropped out when they'd let me at 16 if this program hadn't come along. Maybe I still will because the high school I'm assigned to doesn't have a program like this.
- occupational work adjustment student

I learn better because it's quieter than at school and people listen to the boss.
- CETA program participant

Employer/Sponsors

I don't have to hire risks; the coordinator does the screening for me.
- restaurant manager

Supervising these kids is easier because they have a school-based obligation to the job. A grade and a credit is at stake. They're here to do more than earn money for hub caps.
- shoe store owner

Some of my kids will do the same job for one-fourth the pay of an adult worker.
- city maintenance director

Some people think we are in it to sell insurance. That's not true. We take from the community, and this is part of giving it back; we just want to keep the community vital.
- insurance executive

I communicate better with these kids than I can with my own. I do this (sc) that someone else out there will give the same opportunity and show the same concern for my kids.
- city maintenance director

School Administrators Principals

We hope the program will help potential dropouts, those who are two to three grades behind. They get discouraged here when they are so unequipped academically.

In the community they get exposure to a variety of experiences and challenges; they get to know themselves, their interests, and their abilities.

We want to provide a reasonable next step for vocational students who already have career goals and want specific training.

I would expect the placements to be related to some course, either an academic one or perhaps a careers course. The vo-ed programs are good this way.

Only 27% of the residents of our district have children in the public schools. Through this program we maintain contact with some of the other 73%. We'll need their support at the next levy election.

Ideally, the work experience should stimulate classroom learning. Maybe the less academic kids will come around to the value of basic skills.

I am responsible for the education of students in my building. If they are here, I can be pretty sure that they are learning something. It's a real extension of trust to have faith that all those employers are teachers concerned with the needs of kids.

Parents

I just hope the job will keep him in school by giving him more activity and variety--maybe the money will help too.
- parent of OWE student

He is less alienated than before--easier to get along with. I think they really make him feel part of things down there.
- parent of private sector intern

She has decided against a career she has been set on all of her life. This experience has saved her time and money.
- parent of private sector intern

She seems to have outgrown high school. She is a senior and ready to be an adult; this will give her a chance to see what that is like and to try out a career.
- parent of private sector intern

What Do You Expect from Other Program Constituents?

Learners from employer/sponsors

I need my employer to answer my questions. It's not like school, you can't just bluff your way through.
- cooperative vocational student

He treats me not as cheap labor, but as a true apprentice. He is receptive to the questions I have.
- private sector intern

When the work gets too routine they want to be paid.
- managing engineer

The boss values you not for who you are, but what you can do.
- distributive education student

At school you just lose out if you're lazy. At work the boss loses.
- distributive education student

I'm there to see what it's all about. I want to wander around the computer center--watch what's going on and ask a few questions. Not all the time and I'm sensitive not bother people, but that's what I expect.
- private sector intern

Learners from the coordinator

I would have liked some training or something. I was scared to death on the first day.
- CETA program participant

The kids are really proud when the coordinators come by. They really perk up to show them around.
- restaurant manager

Employer/Sponsors from experiential Learners

Because we are not paying her, I hesitate to ask her to do undesirable grunt work--but sometimes it's just part of my job.
- museum director

I expect them to be punctual and reliable.
- shoe store manager

If they don't do the job, they won't have the job. They must do it right or do it over.
- discount store department manager

Expectations for students are a bit different because they are in a special category. (Name of participant) got off on the day of the prom and was allowed to make up her time. Their school activities are important too.

- personnel manager

CETA wanted the kids to rotate more frequently. We feel they need four weeks to acclimate and four more to get a feeling of accomplishment.

- insurance manager

Hopping around is not fair to the employer. I cannot afford to entertain a child. An intern should be part of the organization, not just observe it.

- museum director

I like getting the A and B students but I don't expect them to stick around. They need to move on to something better.

- restaurant manager

I'm not training another of the work experience students for a while. I invested a lot of time in her. Then as soon as school was over and she wasn't getting credit she left. . . I like my job and I'm proud of my progress. I tried to help that student and she left.

- discount store department manager

Employer/Sponsors from the school

The schools really should offer some career education program so that the kids will have a better idea what they want when they come here.

- museum director

The students who come to us have no idea of the careers available with the bank--the girls all want to be tellers and the boys, bank guards. Their career planning is restricted by their awareness.

- personnel director

The program works best when the teachers refer their students to us. The teachers know them best and can recruit them.

- personnel manager

Employer/Sponsors from the program coordinator

The coordinator should be like a counselor to the kids and should communicate regularly with the employer. I contact the coordinators only of kids who have shown concern. If they haven't contacted me regularly, I just drop the kid.

- restaurant manager

I expect the coordinator to straighten out problems.

- tire and auto service manager

The match with student interests is very important. I have had work-study types in this same position but they were just not interested in getting involved.
- museum director

Employer/Sponsors from the parents

I wish parents would realize that I depend on these kids and not expect to wisk them off on vacation at a moment's notice.
- city maintenance manager

The parents just don't take the kids' jobs very seriously.
- public information agent

Building administrators from the learners

We expect students to prove themselves in class. Some kids transfer here just to get work and pay.

Students must maintain a C average. School comes first.

It's not right for all students; some don't live up to the responsibility. They don't need to shape up or to program themselves to suit the employer, but we do expect them to be on time and to have a good attitude.

We put our best kids forward. They are really our ambassadors in the community. We don't tolerate disruptive students.

Building administrators from employer/sponsors

I just want to know that the employers are giving the kids what we promised--a chance to learn and to do necessary work.

It would be nice if after screening our kids the employer would give us feedback on strengths and weaknesses. This way we would learn about their expectations of the schools and could respond better.

Building administrators from the coordinator

The principal's faith in the coordinator is important. It's a sensitive situation. I don't want the program to be a hassle.

I expect the coordinator to develop a program with academic-related objectives and some evaluation process so that we can be accountable for student learning.

We got into trouble giving credit for just work experience. There has to be some related instruction.

Building administrators from parents

For us to arrange a placement or an apprenticeship is an important commitment. Often the youngster needs parental support to really follow through.

Coordinators from learners

Employers want reliable people. If I spring some dud out there unannounced, I will lose that site.
- CETA youth program coordinator

I guess I do serve the employers' needs. I feel I have to offer them some productivity to keep them with the program.
- private sector program coordinator

Kids are selected for this program based on their grades, their attendance, and a counselor's recommendation. Then you've got to do a good job in shop class to get placed out on the job.
- cooperative vocational program coordinator

I'm not looking for the best kid, but the one who needs it.
- CETA youth program

We expect the students to stay at the site a few weeks before leaving, to ask questions, to get involved in the operation, to have good work habits, and to notify the resource person if they won't be there.
- experience-based career education coordinator

The way they look is important. Many have to cut their hair and they do. Last year we had 120 applications for 60 positions.
- distributive education coordinator

Coordinators from employer/sponsors

We expect a well-supervised jobsite, that the intern be paired up with a regular supervisor and that the supervisor prepare for the intern's presence.
- CETA program coordinator

It is important for the kid to get socialized to the work-place, not just learn to operate a lathe.
- CETA program coordinator

Coordinators from building principal and other school personnel

I expect support from the principals, but I realize it's awkward for them. If they really believe in what they are doing, they feel obligated to keep the kids in school.
- private sector intern coordinator

I expect the administration to be tolerant in allowing me to change a student's schedule.
- CETA program coordinator

It is helpful when teachers recommend kids and then ask them questions about their work.
- CETA program coordinator

I expect the administrator to advocate the program for all kids and not just dump on us students who can't make it in class. The reputation as a rehab-program is killing us.
- work experience program coordinator

Parents from the school

We wanted our daughter in the program after our son had had such a positive experience. We expected her counselor to be more supportive and better informed. The counselor kept pushing the in-school programs.
- parents of private sector intern

I don't think they should give her credit. She's already earning money. It wouldn't be fair to kids who aren't eligible for the program.
- parent of CETA program participant

Parents from the coordinator

The coordinator needs to be more dedicated than a regular teacher--to be almost like a parent to the kids. It requires more personal involvement.
- parent of occupational work adjustment student

The coordinator should make sure some learning is taking place. My son would have been in class learning something.
- parent of private sector intern

Have Your Expectations of Experiential Education Been Fulfilled?

Learners

Here they respect you. At school you're just a student.
- CETA program participant

I feel relieved every day that I can handle it. I feel it's in me, that I can go out with adults and handle things in college.
- private sector intern

I just feel real smart there.
- work experience education student

It's not just an exercise like school.
- private sector intern

I'm doing printing work. It's OK but I really wanted to be with an insurance agent. I guess I couldn't get a paid job in that area.
- work experience education student

I developed a brochure for the agency. I did a good job, but they told me I couldn't do publications anymore because it made the regular staff look bad and set them against the program.
- private sector intern

Employer/Sponsors

They are my most eager workers, good workers. They really want to learn. They look things up in the manuals. The old guys would never do that. They listen to suggestions.
- heavy equipment dealer

We were really skeptical, but the excellent counselors were a major factor in getting us to accept the program. We began with twenty-five interns, and now have forty. At first, we had difficulty placing students; now our supervisors like to brag about their interns.
- personnel manager

Initially about 50% of the kids have attendance problems. Most improve, but we have had to drop five or six.
- personnel manager

Some of the kids need some training in punctuality and human-relations skills.
- restaurant manager

The regulations prevent us from assigning real work, yet the kids are supposed to have a meaningful experience. This is a contradiction.
- hospital administrator

We have work to do. We don't have time to babysit for these kids or to provide answers readily available to anyone who would prepare for an interview by reading our publication.
- museum director

School Administrators

The work experience option lowers the dropout rate. We would otherwise lose those who have to work and those who can't take a full day of academics. Every youngster who stays in school is worth $1,800 to the district.

I am really satisfied. The program has removed disruptive influences from the school where they are a potential threat.

I just don't know that they are all learning. They may have just make-work jobs. This complicates the credit-for-work-experience issue.

We support a number of programs. Opportunities like this should be available to more than just the vocational kids. I definitely prefer concurrent programs. Interns who have been on the job for a semester are a real hybrid--very cocky when they return. Eventually, they come to view the school a management perspective.

The program has to prove itself to the staff to succeed. It's still somewhat of a stepchild.

Parents

She has gained a sense of responsibility and is much better about being on time.

For the high-school level, I think it is absolutely fantastic. These are not children. Doors have been opened. The experience has strengthened her career interest in medicine.

This program is good for everyone even if they work at MacDonald's, they would learn to be patient and friendly and control their attitudes.

What Could Deter You From Participation?

Students

It was a tough decision for me--to do this or play football. I wish I could have enrolled just for second semester.

- distributive education student

It's hard. I'd like to stay with the program but I need the calculus if I want to go into engineering.

Talking to people at work, I've decided to go to college. I may have to drop work now to fit in some of those required classes.

- CETA program participant

Volunteering costs me money. I gave up a job and now I really need the clothes.
- private sector intern

It's difficult getting used to the freedom. I'm not sure I have the self-discipline to get my credits this way.
- field-based academic program participant

Employer/Sponsors

I'm not a nursemaid; when I'm busy, I expect the student to do homework or take initiative on some project here.
- museum director

If we were spending too much time on supervision we would have to opt out.
- Berkshire employer

If suddenly adult workers were available to take these jobs, I would hire them fist.
- restaurant manager

The bargaining unit might interfere with my participation.
- Berkshire employer

I could never conceive of the bank's dropping the program. This is our adopted school. Maybe if there was a lot of thievery--I just couldn't imagine it.
- personnel manager

School Principals

The back-to-basics movement, Proposition 13, and the Serrano decision all pose threats to programs like this one.

The schools change with every new superintendent. Frankly, our employers with the program offer us more stable support.

If graduates from the program can't get hired, then we can't get hired, then we can't justify continuing the program. We recently eliminated the health-careers program. There is not a demand for allied health workers now in our area.

Parents

He would have to give up working if his academics were bad.
- parent of occupational work adjustment student

I'm really concerned that he may be missing out on information he will need for the college boards.
- parent of private sector intern

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

In summary, the major motivations and expectations reported by constituent groups are as follows:

Motivation for Involvement in Experiential Education

Learners

- Chance to earn money (in programs that pay learners)
- Opportunity for career exploration
- Desire for experience outside the classroom

Employer/Sponsors

- Access to reliable, monitored workers
- Support for young people
- Opportunity for community service
- Interest in giving youth a favorable impression of business

School Administrators

- Interest in a less academic option for potential dropouts
- Need for a career exploration program
- Income for disadvantaged and college-bound students
- Access to current vocational training

Coordinators

- Opportunity to work individually with learners
- Access to resources not available at the school

Parents

- Access to career exploration
- Access to skill training and work experience
- Supplement to family income
- Alternative educational option for the nonacademic

Expectations of Benefit from Experiential Education Participation

Learners

- Experience, leading to respectable stable employment
- Foundation for informed career selection
- Growth toward competent, confident adulthood
- Motivation to stay in school

Employer/Sponsor

- Access to coordinators screening and support services
- Some productivity from learners
- Improved public relations and public image
- Opportunity to recruit permanent employees

School Administrators

- Provision of a learning option for frustrated, nonacademic students
- Provision of career exploration for able youth
- Increased awareness and support for the school
- Access to resource people in the community

Parents

There was little consensus among parents of learners. Parents expected benefits related to needs they perceived in their youngsters.

Expectations from Others Involved in the Experiential Education Program

LEARNERS from Employer/Sponsors

- Willingness to answer questions
- Supervision and direction regarding assigned work
- Stimulating work (more important to nonpaid learners)
- Flexibility to meet developmental needs (especially important to nonpaid learners)

Learners from the School

- Graduation credit for experiences (favored by students involved in placement-related instructional programs; discounted by those not involved in field-related instructional programs)

Learners from the Coordinator

- A placement related to career or academic interests
- Orientation to field-site conditions and expectations
- Access to problem-solving assistance

EMPLOYER/SPONSORS from the Learner

- Reliability
- Productivity (somewhat stronger in paid programs)
- Fairly long-term commitment to one placement
- Initiative

Employer/Sponsors from the School

- Provision of a career education program for students
- Referrals from teachers who work directly with students
- Authority to discharge uncooperative learners

Employer/Sponsors from the Coordinator

- Recruitment and screening of learners
- Trouble-shooting services
- Match between needs and expectations of the student and those of the sponsor

Employer/Sponsors from the Parents

- Acceptance of the students placement as a serious commitment

BUILDING ADMINISTRATORS from Learners

- Responsible behavior in the community

Building Administrators from Employer-Sponsors

- Provision of meaningful work
- Supportive environment for learning
- Feedback on enrollee achievements and weaknesses

Building Administrators from the Coordinator

- Maintenance of a hassle-free program
- Monitoring the academic credibility of credit-bearing programs
- Improved community relations

Building Administrators from Parents

- Support of student participation in the program

COORDINATORS from the Learners

- Behavior conducive to positive program image
- Responsive attitude to employer/sponsor needs
- Maintenance of acceptable academic performance
- Career motivation
- Other program-specific behaviors

Coordinators from the Employer/Sponsors

- Sensitive, responsible supervision
- Awareness of and attention to student learning and developmental needs
- Participation in enrollee evaluation

Coordinators from the Principal and School Personnel

- Consistent, visible support for the program
- Flexibility, particularly with regard to scheduling
- Promotion of experiential education as appropriate for all students, not exclusively for the nonacademic

Coordinators from Parents

- Interest in and support for the program experience
- Occasional sponsoring of a learner

PARENTS from the Learner

- Continued satisfactory academic performance in classroom learning experiences

Parents from Employer/Sponsors

- Interest in learner's welfare and safety
- Provision of meaningful, structured activities

Parents from the School

- Supportive, enthusiastic stance toward experiential education
- Graduation credit for experiential education (not universally expected)

Parents from the Coordinator

- Monitoring of a safe working environment
- Assurance that meaningful learning is occurring at the placement
- Consistent communication with the learner and, to a lesser extent, with the parents

Expectations of Experiential Education Fulfilled

Learner Satisfactions

- Being treated as an adult at the workplace
- Playing a significant role in a cooperative effort
- Enhanced self-confidence
- Career direction

Learner Concerns

- Lack of match between placement and career interest
- Inadequate time at the community site
- Inadequate support services (career and personal counseling)
- Cost of appropriate worksite wardrobe (especially for nonpaid learners)

Employer/Sponsor Satisfactions

- Productivity of learners
- Services provided by coordinator
- Attitude and enthusiasm of learners

Employer/Sponsor Concerns

- Problems with attendance and punctuality
- Regulations prohibiting experiential learners from doing "real work"
- Disruptive, superficial short-term placements

School Administrator Satisfactions

- Removal of frustrated, nonproductive students from the building
- Lowered drop-out rate achieved by alternative learning option for the nonacademic
- Outlet for students eager to grow up and begin a career

School Administrator Concerns

- Quality of community-based learning experiences
- Occasional supercilious attitude of experiential learners on their return to the traditional classroom setting.
- Skepticism regarding increased employment or employability of program graduates

Parent Satisfactions

- Increased maturity and responsibility of participants
- Solidified career plans of participants

Parent Concerns

- Loss of benefits from foregone in-school learning
- Exclusion of students from traditional extra-curricular activities

Deterrents to Participation

For Learners

- Exclusion from participation in school sports
- Difficulty of scheduling both college requirements and field experiences
- Elimination of income provided by a regular job (in nonpaid programs)
- Risk involved in earning required credits through nontraditional activities

For Employer/Sponsor

- Decline in quality of experiential learners
- Increased time required to supervise learners
- Serious recession creating unemployment problems

For School Administrators

- Pervasive "back-to-basics" movement
- Reduction in school funding
- Inconsistent support from district administration
- Other imminent school pressures

For Parents

- Decline in academic performance initiated by program participation
- Interference with participation in college-preparation courses

Discussion

The cross-question response patterns evidenced by the five groups surveyed reveal values and anomalies potentially significant for program planners. For instance, benefits anticipated by learners from experiential education participation were primarily instrumental--skill training, career exploration, and the opportunity to earn a wage. But major satisfactions graduates were in the affective realm--increased self-confidence, progress toward adulthood, and participation in a meaningful cooperative undertaking.

Fulfilled expectations served primarily as dissatisfiers; that is, learners assumed they would enjoy certain benefits from participation and, when these did not materialize, participants were indignant. Students ultimately valued and were most satisfied with their experiences based on unanticipated, affective outcomes. They were inclined to describe program-related experiences more as a series of critical incidents than as a succession of assignments.

In contrast to the allusions found in the literature, we learned that a great proportion of students interviewed had elected experiential learning out of disenchantment and frustration with their traditional education. Many young people candidly admitted that initially they were not necessarily moving toward experiential education but rather away from what they considered a monotonous, superficial cycle of classes and examinations. They had elected the experiential program as a haven with potential. This prevalent motivation set has implications for both experiential coordinators and for public school educators.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Interview data revealed seven areas of conflicting expectations: pay, recruitment, support for programs, quality of learning, graduation credit for experiences, creation of placements, and appropriate scheduling. It is important to note that these areas were not problematic in all programs, however, the data does establish a concentration of concern regarding these issues.

Pay

A consistent influence in determining expectation patterns was the pay/no pay policy of the respondent's program. Interviewees affiliated with paying programs were inclined to expect work experience and skill development. Those involved in non-paying programs tended to expect career exploration and personal development. These emphases, though not exclusive, were primary.

Although coordinators and principals were inclined to disregard the pay issue in deference to the educational purposes of experiential education, it was obvious from the interviews that money was a primary factor in establishing the expectation of learners and employer/sponsors. The reality is that promise of income attracts many young people to experiential education, and for disadvantaged youth a program offering paid experiences is especially attractive. Further, many employer/sponsors prefer to pay learners, believing that the salary commits the learner to productivity and accountability. Pay fits the experiential learner into a framework the employer can understand.

Some coordinators felt that paid placements had educational value inasmuch as they accurately reflected real work conditions. For those programs professing employment readiness as a goal, salary and related issues constituted basic curriculum foci and involvement in a paid placement was integral to the program experience. That is, program objectives encompassed learning experientially about wage rates, benefit programs, and taxes.

Individuals affiliated with nonpaid programs, particularly with those granting credit, feared that pay might attract insincere learners and employers prone to stress productivity to the exclusion of developmental goals.

This concern is the crux of the pay issue: the potential conflict between the productivity expectation of the employer/sponsor and the educational expectation of the school.

Recommendations. Policy with regard to pay for worksite experience should emanate from the needs of the learners. If learners need or expect work experience, training and/or exposure to workplace realities, they should be paid and should accept some pressure for productivity.

If learners expect to explore careers, complement their academic interests, or test their aptitudes in workplace settings, they need not be paid. Further, a nonpaid option often makes available placements with professionals who have only marginal need for unsophisticated workers but who are willing to provide stimulating placements for learners. Agencies, too, though unable to pay learners, may offer them unique opportunities.

Exclusive adherence to either policy with regard to pay may exclude potential learners, eliminate possible benefits, or deter some sponsors from participation.

Recruitment

Compiled responses suggest some disagreement with regard to which candidates are appropriate for participation in experiential education. This ambiguity is particularly apparent in the comments of principals and program coordinators. While principals expected programs to provide options for frustrated, nonacademic students, at the same time they hoped that field-based learners would promote and enhance a positive school image in the community. Coordinators reported being torn between serving marginal youngsters who would benefit from the program or talented youngsters who would strengthen its reputation and stability. If demand for experiential programs was high, stringent qualifications imposed on participation often excluded less accomplished, less socialized applicants.

Recommendations. Based on responses from all groups, it is apparent that some youngsters who cannot (or do not) succeed in the classroom may become productive learners at the worksite. Their testimony indicates that all students should have equal access to experiential options.

Principals attributed successful placement of high-risk students to conscientious monitoring and counseling by program coordinators. Participants with marginal histories of school success should be provided extensive orientation and perhaps intensive counseling and coordinator services (frequently referred to and requested by respondents). Assisting these learners mandates consistent, honest communication between the employer/sponsor and the coordinator.

Gifted students with different needs should also be given access to experiential education and not be discouraged from participation by teachers who like to have them in the classroom to serve as sparklers.

Field-based learners are most successful in meeting their own needs and effective in a public relations role when imbued with a pride in and responsibility for the program as an entity. To this end and for other reasons, reflective sessions and group activities within the program context are recommended.

Support for Programs

Coordinators and parents described support for experiential education on the part of school constituencies as unpredictable. Parents described principals who were concerned about complications which might arise from having learners unaccompanied in the community; counselors who were unfamiliar with field-based options; teachers who were threatened by the drain of learners from their classes; and district administrators, who, trapped by budgetary cutbacks, were vigilantly eliminating special programs.

Many coordinators referred to an existence on the margin of the traditional curriculum and alluded to an annual ritual of justifying the program's existence and wresting the requisite number of learners from somewhat possessive faculties. Coordinators and parents felt that the needs of learners and the expectations of parents with respect to experiential education were sometimes buried in the morass of pressures and priorities imposed upon the school.

Recommendations. Advocates of experiential education must become more vocal. Parents and learners convinced of the benefits of experiential education rarely communicate their satisfaction to administrative personnel. Building principals are sensitive to the expectations of students and parents. Aggressive support from these constituencies could guarantee programs a more stable position on the priority lists of principals and administrators.

Coordinators could do more to involve teachers in experiential education programming. In some districts classroom teachers have come to regard experiential learning as a complementary, not competing, educational option. Programs benefit when coordinators stress the potentially synergistic relationship between classroom and community experiences. Experiential education should facilitate the teacher's job, not complicate it or eliminate it.

Experiential programs need to attain visability among district administrators and national leaders. Support for educational innovation and reform at the building level often is initiated or constrained by decision makers outside of the building.

Quality of Learning

Some parents and many principals expressed concern for the quality of learning experienced at worksite placements. Interviewees feared lest learners be used as cheap labor or left to wander undirected. This concern was particularly acute when students were being granted credit for field activities.

Response patterns of employer/sponsors reflect a delicate balance between an altruistic commitment to service to youth and a businesslike concern for standards and efficiency. These respondents seem vulnerable to a role conflict between that of humanitarian teacher and that of exacting employer. Paying the learner sometimes solved this conflict by providing some justification for a dominant employer/employee relationship. A learning contract outlining the participant's developmental goals tended to promote the role of teacher. Both roles were appropriate and effective when based on learner expectations and program goals.

Recommendations. Students must approach worksites with specific learning goals in mind, and employer/sponsors must be able to communicate what they expect from learners in specific terms. The learner and employer/sponsor, assisted perhaps by the coordinator or by the use of an appropriate form, should draw up a performance contract outlining the respective needs and goals of learners and employer/sponsor. Subsequently, via the contract, they should agree to assist each other in meeting those needs and goals. The role of the coordinator is to monitor and facilitate progress toward those goals.

Graduation Credit for Experiences

Researchers encountered considerable variation and ambivalence with regard to granting school credit for community-based experiences. Some programs have developed structured systems for evaluating learning and granting credit. In others, credit was awarded based on time-on-site--often two hours at the workplace judged equivalent to one hour in class. Some participants believed that credit constituted an alternative form of pay and, therefore, should not be made available to students receiving wages.

Recommendations. Credit should be granted based on the quantity and quality of learning experienced at the worksite. Time invested in a repetitive, unchallenging activity should not translate into graduation credit. Pay and credit should be regarded by policy makers as separate issues, such that students are paid for productivity and granted credit for demonstrated

learning. Certainly a student could earn and learn through a well organized community experience. Program planners must continue to develop effective methods for monitoring and measuring field-based learning, particularly affective learning.

Creation of Placements

Employer/sponsors reported that they were desirous of providing meaningful work for learners but were constrained by statutes, union regulations, and program policies which exclude learners from work regularly assigned to a permanent employee. In order words, the employer's dilemma was to make work for learners; whereas, on the other hand, principals and coordinators did not want learners assigned to "make-work" jobs.

Recommendations. Learners can be involved in meaningful work which is appreciated but not normally undertaken because of budgetary constraints and production pressures. This solution is particularly relevant for CETA-subsidized learner/workers.

Learners can be sponsored in an OJT capacity such that their productivity compensates for time invested in their supervision and might actually create work for other employees. Ultimately, employers benefit when they are able to hire a trained worker or to dismiss the worker without the attendant complication of releasing a regular employee.

Nonpaid learners with their own developmental goals in mind can design meaningful activities which capitalize on worksite resources but do not intrude on staffing or production policies.

More research is needed to determine how employer/sponsors are managing to provide meaningful developmental experiences for youth without displacing regular workers.

Appropriate Scheduling

Learners and employer/sponsors suggested that potential benefits of experiential education are often compromised when learners are involved at the worksite too infrequently or for too short a time. Learners involved for less than six hours per week report disjointed, only marginally satisfying experiences. Sponsors of learners who are rotated through many positions complain of excessive supervision demands and report that the rotating students gain only superficial impressions and are never really integrated with the work environment.

Recommendations. If, for purposes of simplifying scheduling or assigning credit, a program standard must be established with

regard to time at the worksite, then placements must be developed with attention to the compatability of that policy with the strategic conditions and social complexity of the worksite. When this compatability is compromised to bolster "numbers placed," the learners and employer/sponsors are cheated.

EBCE planners have made progress in developing policies to coordinate the time, credit and scheduling priorities of schools and sponsors in situations where short-term experiences are conducive to learner development. The learner's schedule, emanating from the preferences of the learner and the expectations of the employer/sponsor, should be drawn up collaboratively, with coordinator assistance. In some cases, it is desirable to postpone finalization of the worksite schedule until the mesh between the aptitude of the learner and the potential of the worksite is established. To the extent that the learner and sponsor concur that more time at the community site is desirable and to the extent that such participation will not interfere with student progress toward graduation or conflict with child-labor laws, to this extent more extensive participation should be encouraged.

Summary

Learners and parents of learners are convinced of the value of experiential education as either a critical supplement to, or an integral part of, the academic education provided high school students. Employer/sponsors of learners are supportive of experiential education on the condition that organizational efficiency and productivity not be compromised. School administrators, besieged by other pressures and priorities, are interested in experiential education as a means of addressing building problems and community expectations.

This substantial support would bode well for experiential education except that each constituency brings to program participation a unique set of motivations, expectations and needs. Though learner needs must be kept primary, the needs of employer/sponsors and administrators can be addressed concurrently. And, realistically, they must be addressed if experiential education is to exist at all. Without administrative support and/or available field placements, program development falters at the "good idea" stage.

Experiential education is a format particularly effective in helping youngsters negotiate the transition between school and work, between youth and adulthood. Designing stable programs to meet the needs of these youngsters requires sensitive attention to the expectations of five critical groups: students, employer/sponsors, building principals, coordinators, and parents.

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